

I believe our justice system is stronger when it incorporates the insights of experts who have worked across the legal spectrum. That is why, as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I have worked to confirm Federal judges who have served as public defenders. These perspectives have long been excluded from the Federal bench, which is a disservice to the American public. Thankfully, we are finally changing course. Last year, this Senate confirmed the first former public defender to ever serve on the Supreme Court: Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.

And in the past 2 years, we have confirmed more circuit judges with experience as public defenders than all prior Presidents combined. One of them is Judge Candace Jackson-Akiwumi, who serves on the Seventh Circuit in my home State of Illinois. Back in 2017, Judge Jackson-Akiwumi reflected on her time as a public defender—and how it tested her as a legal professional.

She wrote that, as a public defender, “I am a counselor, helping clients to navigate difficult choices. . . . I am a teacher, introducing clients and their families to the federal court system

“[and] I am a lay social worker: many of our clients have disadvantaged backgrounds, extensive mental health histories, substance abuse issues, and other everyday challenges.”

When you work as a public defender, the job demands a lot more than a simple attorney-client relationship. It is a job that demands resourcefulness, thoughtfulness, and quick, strategic thinking. These are the same qualities we need in the judges who serve on our Nation’s Federal courts. And they are the same qualities people look for when they enter the courtroom as a plaintiff or defendant.

So as we honor National Public Defender Day this weekend, I want to thank all of our courageous and dedicated public defense attorneys across America. We are grateful for your commitment to defending equal justice under law.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 858. A bill to permit the televising of Supreme Court proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 858

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Cameras in the Courtroom Act”.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO TITLE 28.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 45 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following:

“§ 678. Televising Supreme Court proceedings

“The Supreme Court shall permit television coverage of all open sessions of the Court unless the Court decides, by a vote of the majority of justices, that allowing such coverage in a particular case would constitute a violation of the due process rights of 1 or more of the parties before the Court.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 45 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following:

“678. Televising Supreme Court proceedings.”.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 862. A bill to address health workforce shortages through additional funding for the National Health Service Corps, and to establish a National Health Service Corps Emergency Service demonstration project; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 862

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Restoring America’s Health Care Workforce and Readiness Act”.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS.

(a) ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—Section 10503(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 254b-2(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (G), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (H), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(I) \$625,000,000 for fiscal year 2024;

“(J) \$675,000,000 for fiscal year 2025; and

“(K) \$825,000,000 for fiscal year 2026.”.

(b) NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS EMERGENCY SERVICE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—Part B of title XXVIII of the Public Health Service Act is amended by inserting after section 2812 (42 U.S.C. 300hh-11) the following:

“SEC. 2812A. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS EMERGENCY SERVICE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years [2024] through [2026], from the amounts made available under section 10503(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, to the extent permitted by, and consistent with, the requirements of applicable State law, the Secretary shall allocate up to \$50,000,000 to establishing, as a demonstration project, a National Health Service Corps Emergency Service (referred to in this section as the ‘emergency service’) under which a qualified individual currently or previously participating in the National Health Service Corps agrees to engage in service through the National Disaster Medical System established under section 2812, as described in this section.

“(b) PARTICIPANTS.—

“(1) NHSC ALUMNI.—

“(A) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.—An individual may be eligible to participate in the

emergency service under this section if such individual participated in the Scholarship Program under section 338A or the Loan Repayment Program under section 338B, and satisfied the obligated service requirements under such program, in accordance with the individual’s contract.

“(B) PRIORITY AND INCREASED FUNDING AMOUNTS.—

“(i) PRIORITY.—In selecting eligible individuals to participate in the program under this paragraph, the Secretary shall give priority—

“(I) first, to qualified individuals who continue to practice at the site where the individual fulfilled his or her obligated service under the Scholarship Program or Loan Repayment Program through the time of the application to the program under this section; and

“(II) secondly, to qualified individuals who continue to practice in any site approved for obligated service under the Scholarship Program or Loan Repayment Program other than the site at which the individual served.

“(ii) INCREASED FUNDING AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may grant increased award amounts to certain participants in the program under this section based on the site where a participant fulfilled his or her obligated service under the Scholarship Program or Loan Repayment Program.

“(C) PRIVATE PRACTICE.—An individual participating in the emergency service under this section may practice a health profession in any private capacity when not obligated to fulfill the requirements described in subsection (c).

“(2) CURRENT NHSC MEMBERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An individual who is participating in the Scholarship Program under section 338A or the Loan Repayment Program under section 338B may apply to participate in the program under this section while fulfilling the individual’s obligated services under such program.

“(B) CLARIFICATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law or any contract with respect to service requirements under the Scholarship Program or Loan Repayment Program, an individual fulfilling service requirements described in subsection (c) shall not be considered in breach of such contract under such Scholarship Program or Loan Repayment Program, provided that the individual give advance and reasonable notification to the site at which the individual is fulfilling his or her obligated service requirements under such contract, and the site approves the individual’s deployment through the National Disaster Medical System.

“(C) NO CREDIT TOWARD OBLIGATED SERVICE.—No period of service under the National Disaster Medical System described in subsection (c)(1) shall be counted toward satisfying a period of obligated service under the Scholarship Program or Loan Repayment Program.

“(c) PARTICIPANTS AS MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL DISASTER MEDICAL SYSTEM.—

“(1) SERVICE REQUIREMENTS.—An individual participating in the program under this section shall participate in the activities of the National Disaster Medical System under section 2812 in the same manner and to the same extent as other participants in such system.

“(2) RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS.—An individual participating in the program under this section shall be considered participants in the National Disaster Medical System and shall be subject to the rights and requirements of subsections (c) and (d) of section 2812.

“(d) EMERGENCY SERVICE PLAN.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the

Health Resources and Services Administration and the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, shall establish an action plan for the service commitments, deployment protocols, coordination efforts, training requirements, liability, workforce development, and such other considerations as the Secretary determines appropriate. Such action plan shall—

“(1) ensure adherence to the missions of both the National Health Service Corps and National Disaster Medical Service;

“(2) outline the type of providers determined by the Assistant Secretary to be priorities for participation in the program established under this section;

“(3) describe how such deployments will be determined and prioritized in a manner consistent with—

“(A) the National Health Service Corps contracts; and

“(B) the National Disaster Medical System's deployment policy of not hindering civilian responders already engaged in an emergency response;

“(4) ensure an adequate health care workforce during a public health emergency declared by the Secretary under section 319 of this Act, a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, an emergency declared by the President under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, or a national emergency declared by the President under the National Emergencies Act; and

“(5) describe how the program established under this section will be implemented in a manner consistent with, and in furtherance of, the assessments and goals for workforce and training described in the review conducted by the Secretary under section 2812(b)(2).

“(e) **CONTRACTS FOR CERTAIN PARTICIPATING INDIVIDUALS.**—An individual who is participating in the emergency service program under this section shall receive loan repayments in an amount up to 50 percent (as determined by the Secretary) of the highest new award made for the year under the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program pursuant to a contract entered into at the same time under section 338B(g), in a manner similar to the manner in which payments are made under such section, pursuant to the terms of a contract between the Secretary and such individual. The Secretary shall establish a system of contracting for purposes of this subsection which shall be similar to the contract requirements and terms under subsections (c), (d), and (f) of section 338B. Amounts received by an individual under this subsection shall be in addition to any amounts received by an individual described in subsection (b)(2) pursuant to the Scholarship Program under section 338A or the Loan Repayment Program under section 338B, as applicable.

“(f) **BREACH OF CONTRACT, TERMINATION, WAIVER, AND SUSPENSION.**—

“(1) **RECOVERY OF AMOUNTS IN THE EVENT OF A BREACH.**—If an individual breaches the written contract of the individual under subsection (e) by failing either to begin such individual's service obligation in accordance with such contract or to complete such service obligation, the United States shall be entitled to recover from the individual an amount equal to the sum of—

“(A) the total of the amounts paid by the United States under such contract on behalf of the individual for any period of such service not served;

“(B) an amount equal to the product of the number of months of service that were not completed by the individual, multiplied by \$3,750; and

“(C) the interest on the amounts described in subparagraphs (A) and (B), at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States, from the date of the breach.

“(2) **TERMINATION OF CONTRACT.**—The Secretary may terminate a contract under subsection (e) in accordance with the termination standards that are—

“(A) applicable to contracts entered into under section 338B; and

“(B) in effect in the fiscal year in which such contract was entered.

“(3) **WAIVER OR SUSPENSION OF OBLIGATION.**—If an individual participating in the program under this section submits a written request to the Secretary, the Secretary may waive or suspend a service or payment obligation arising under this subsection or a contract under subsection (e), in whole or in part, in accordance with the standards set forth in section 62.12 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations).

“(g) **REPORT.**—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report that evaluates the demonstration project established under this section, including—

“(1) the effects of such program on health care access in underserved areas and health professional shortage areas and on public health emergency response capacity;

“(2) the effects of such program on the health care provider workforce pipeline, including any impact on the fields or specialties pursued by students in approved graduate training programs in medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, behavioral and mental health, or other health profession;

“(3) the impact of such program on the enrollment, participation, and completion of requirements in the underlying scholarship and loan repayment programs of the National Health Service Corps;

“(4) the effects of such program on the National Disaster Medical System's response capability, readiness, and workforce strength; and

“(5) recommendations for improving the demonstration project described in this section, and any other considerations as the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 865. A bill to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to promote transparency by permitting the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board to allow its disciplinary proceedings to be open to the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Madam President, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, PCAOB, Enforcement Transparency Act, which I am reintroducing today with Senator GRASSLEY, will bring needed transparency to the disciplinary proceedings the PCAOB has brought against auditors and audit firms earlier in the process.

Nearly two decades ago, in response to a series of massive financial reporting frauds, including those involving Enron and WorldCom, the Senate Banking Committee held multiple hearings, which produced consensus on various underlying causes, including weak corporate governance, a lack of

accountability, and inadequate oversight of accountants charged with auditing public companies' financial statements. Later, in a 99-to-0 vote, the Senate passed the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to address the structural weaknesses revealed by the hearings. Among its many provisions, this law called for the creation of an independent board, the PCAOB, responsible for overseeing auditors of public companies in order to protect investors who rely on independent audit reports on the financial statements of public companies.

Today, the PCAOB, under the oversight of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commissions, SEC, oversees nearly 1,700 registered accounting firms, as well as the audit partners and staff who contribute to a firm's work on each audit. The Board's ability to begin proceedings that can determine whether there have been violations of its auditing standards or rules of professional practice is a crucial component of its oversight. However, unlike other oversight bodies, the Board's disciplinary proceedings cannot be made public without consent from the parties involved. Of course, parties subject to disciplinary proceedings have no incentive to consent to publicizing their alleged wrongdoing, and these proceedings typically remain cloaked behind a veil of secrecy. In addition, the Board cannot publicize the results of its disciplinary proceedings until after the appeals process has been completely exhausted, which can often take several years.

This lack of transparency invites abuse and undermines the congressional intent behind the PCAOB, which was to shine a bright light on auditing firms and practices, deter misconduct, and bolster the accountability of auditors of public companies to the investing public.

Our bill will restore transparency by making hearings by the PCAOB and all related notices, orders, and notices, orders and motions transparent and available to the public unless otherwise ordered by the Board. This would more closely align the PCAOB's procedures with those of the SEC for analogous matters.

Increasing transparency and accountability of audit firms subject to PCAOB disciplinary proceedings bolsters investor confidence in our financial markets and better protects companies from problematic auditors. I hope our colleagues will join Senator GRASSLEY and me in supporting this legislation to enhance transparency in the PCAOB's enforcement process.